

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 00277 191431Z

42

ACTION SCS-03

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SCA-01 SSO-00 DHA-02 PPT-01 /018 W

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O 191420Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

SECSTATE IMMEDIATE 5897

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE DAMASCUS 277

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC

SUBJ: W/W: ARRESTS: MICHAEL COWLES

REF: STATE 10682

1. SYRIAN AUTHORITIES THUS FAR ARE UNWILLING AUTHORIZE ENTRY OF AMCITS WITHOUT PASSPORTS OR VISAS, DESPITE OUR EXPLANATIONS OF DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED AND OF THE CONTINUING PHYSICAL DANGER TO THE AMCITS. SYRIANS WOULD ADMIT THE AMERICANS IF THEY WERE IN POSSESSION OF LETTER (REALLY AN INFORMAL LAISSEZ-PASSER) FROM EMBASSY BEIRUT. WE ASSUME THAT BEIRUT IS UNABLE TO GET SUCH A LETTER TO THE CITIZENS AND WE CONTINUE EFFORTS TO HAVE THEM ADMITTED ON OUR GUARANTEE OF DOCUMENTATION AND ONWARD TRAVEL.

2. OUR ATTEMPTS THROUGH REGULAR IMMIGRATION CHANNELS HAVE SO FAR BEEN DISAPPOINTING, AS IMMIGRATION CHIEF CURRENTLY HIMSELF IN JAIL AND HIS SUBORDINATES UNWILLING ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR UNUSUAL ACTION. A FURTHER REPORT WILL BE CABLED ON TUESDAY, JAN 20, FOLLOWING APPROACH THROUGH FOREIGN MINISTRY.

3. STATE REFTTEL, RECEIVED HERE TODAY, JAN 19, SUGGESTS POSSIBILITY THAT COWLES NOW IN TRIPOLI. PRESENT LOCATION OF BOTH CITIZENS IS NEEDED INFORMATION FOR US IN ARRANGEMENTS WITH SYRIANS.
MURPHY

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Authority: morefirh
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